

Attorney's Manual for Courtroom Technology



U. S. District Court
Western District of Oklahoma

Overview

The U.S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma launched a program several years ago to provide state-of-the-art technology for evidence presentation in the courtroom. A key goal was to provide systems that are sophisticated, user-friendly, and flexible. The result of this effort is a choice of evidence presentation technologies to satisfy the different requirements attorneys may have.

This guide is a general overview of the courtroom equipment, containing some basic orientation and instructions. For more detailed information and instructions, the Clerk's Office staff will be happy to assist you.



Courtroom 304

The technology implemented in courtroom 304 allows attorneys to display evidence using a document camera, VCR, computer, or virtually any other audio-visual source. There are connections under both counsel tables, at the podium, and in both the judge's and deputy's benches for computer video (VGA) and audio, as well as connections for other video / audio sources.

There are touch screen panels for the presentation display system controlled by the judge and / or courtroom deputy. These controllers operate both the audio and video systems – they interface with the control center, or “brain,” of the entire system.



In addition, there is a smaller touch panel located on the podium, which allows a limited control of the sources attached to the podium only. This is the touch panel primarily dealt with in this manual.



It is important to note that *the touch panel on the podium is not active unless the courtroom deputy or judge gives control*. The attorney is to notify the courtroom deputy which source to select – podium, counsel table, or other. When the podium is selected, the podium panel then becomes active, and can be used to switch between sources on the podium, and control the document camera and VCR.

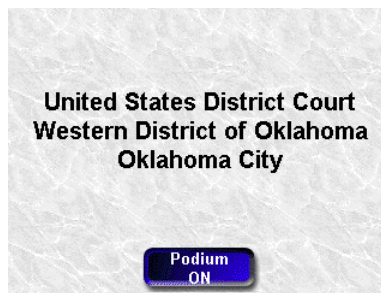
The Podium



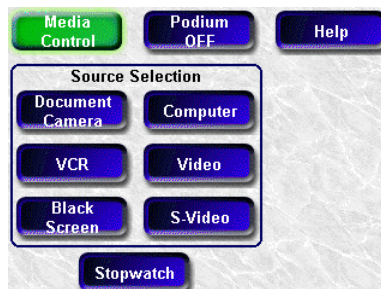
The podium can be turned a full 360 degrees. A document camera and VCR are located on an attached cart that pulls out to the side of the podium when needed, and can be stored neatly inside the podium when not in use. On top of the podium are inputs for computer video and audio. On the pull-out cart are inputs for other audio / video sources. If this equipment is to be used, it is usually set up before a hearing or jury argument begins.

The courtroom deputy will assist with the setup of the equipment, and the placement of the podium.

In most cases, the equipment on the podium will be powered on and ready to use before a hearing or jury argument. If for some reason this is not the case, the equipment can be powered on by pressing 'Podium On' on the podium touch panel.



Pressing 'Podium On' will then bring up the following 'Source Selection' screen, which allows switching between the various sources on the podium.



The Document Camera



The document camera allows any item(s) that are placed on its display surface to be viewed on the courtroom monitors. You can use the document camera to display virtually anything: 3-D objects, transparent sheets, slides, and opaque presentation materials. You can choose a black-and-white display for more clarity, or the color display. There is also a negative/positive switch used for items such as X-rays. This document camera projects a clear image of evidence so that all counsel, the witness, and the jury have the same perspective of the exhibit.

Pressing 'Document Camera' on the 'Source Selection' screen of the podium touch panel brings up the following screen, used for controlling the document camera. The document camera is also automatically powered on when this button is pressed.



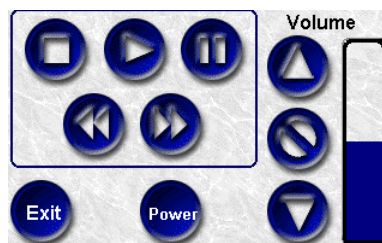
Pressing 'Exit' on this screen will bring up the 'Source Selection' screen shown above.

The VCR



The VCR allows a videotape to be displayed on all of the courtroom monitors. The VCR is located on a shelf just beneath the document camera.

Pressing 'VCR' on the 'Source Selection' screen of the podium touch panel brings up the following screen, used for controlling the VCR.



The VCR must be powered on manually (by using the 'Power' button shown above) before use. Pressing 'Exit' on this screen will bring up the 'Source Selection' screen.

Other Video Sources

Computer: Pressing 'Computer' on the 'Source Selection' screen of the podium touch panel selects the computer (VGA) input located on top of the podium.

Note: Computer display properties must be set to 1024x768 resolution with a 60Hz refresh rate!

Video: Pressing 'Video' on the 'Source Selection' screen of the podium touch panel selects the analog video (RCA) input located just to the left of the document camera.

S-Video: Pressing 'S-Video' on the 'Source Selection' screen of the podium touch panel selects the S-Video input located just to the left of the document camera.

Annotation



The courtroom is equipped with two touch screen lcd panels, one at the witness stand, and one on the podium. These are used for annotating the evidence being presented. At either location, witnesses or counsel can 'draw' on the image being displayed on the courtroom monitors by simply touching the monitor with a finger.

The color of the markings can be changed by pressing once on the lower left-hand corner of the monitor screen with a finger. The last marking can be removed by pressing once on the upper right-hand corner of the monitor screen, and all markings can be removed by pressing once on the lower right-hand corner of the monitor screen.

Video Printer



The color video printer allows printing of a digital picture of the currently selected video source, including any annotations made. Anything viewed on the courtroom monitors can be turned into hard copy for evidence purposes.

The printer is located near the courtroom deputy and must be activated by the courtroom deputy or judge.

Display Devices



In addition to the annotation monitors listed above, the courtroom is equipped with two 42 inch plasma monitors for the jury, as well as 15 inch lcd monitors for each of the counsel tables, the deputy / court reporter, and the judge. Additional equipment can be interfaced into the system, allowing for projectors and screens if attorneys desire and the judge allows it. Any additional equipment of this type will need to be provided by the attorneys.

Requests for permission to use this type of equipment during a proceeding should go through the courtroom deputy.

Microphones

Attorney Locations



On the base of these desk microphones there is a privacy mute button. Press and hold this mute button with your finger to mute this microphone in all speakers and all recording devices. Don't worry: if you accidentally hit this mute button with a book or other object, it will not mute, because the button is human touch sensitive. *NOTE: This is the only fully private mode. Your voice will be picked up by the court reporter, even if the system is in the All Audio Off mode.*

A wireless handheld microphone is also available for use.

Infrared System

(Dual Channel Headset Receiver)

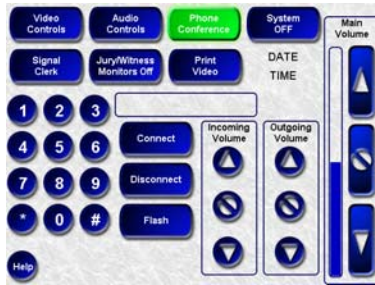


This is a two-channel system:
Channel 1 broadcasts the language interpretation;
Channel 2 broadcasts the proceedings for the hearing impaired.

In brief, this is how it works: a transmitter is mounted on the ceiling in the corner opposite the jury box. The transmitter sends audio signals to the headsets using infrared waves.

Four infrared headsets are provided in the courtroom for the hearing impaired and for foreign language speakers. The courtroom deputy will set up and coordinate the use of the equipment.

Teleconferencing



The audio system is interfaced with a telephone conferencing system, allowing remote parties to participate in court proceedings. All participants in the courtroom should speak into one of the audio system microphones in order to be heard by the remote party. The audio from the remote party is heard through the courtroom audio system. Calls are placed by the courtroom deputy.

Courtrooms 301, 302, 305, 401, 501, and 503

Similar to courtroom 304, the technology implemented in these courtrooms allow attorneys to display evidence using a document camera, VCR, computer, or virtually any other audio-visual source. The main difference is that the systems in these courtrooms are analog, meaning that higher resolution signals such as those from a computer (VGA) must first be converted before they can be displayed throughout the courtroom. This conversion process results in a reduction of clarity over the newer digital systems, yet still provides a very useful tool for evidence presentation.

Switching between video sources in these courtrooms takes place on the document camera itself. There are three inputs on each document camera. One is for the camera, one is for the VCR, and one is for another video source such as a computer (through a scan converter, which is available in each courtroom).

The Document Camera



The document camera allows any item(s) that are placed on its display surface to be viewed on the courtroom monitors. You can use the document camera to display virtually anything: 3-D objects, transparent sheets, slides, and opaque presentation materials. You can choose a black-and-white display for more clarity, or the color display. There is also a negative/positive switch used for items such as X-rays. This document camera projects a clear image of evidence so that all counsel, the witness, and the jury have the same perspective of the exhibit.

The VCR



The VCR allows a videotape to be displayed on all of the courtroom monitors. The VCR is located on a shelf just beneath the document camera. Either the buttons on the front of the VCR, or a wireless remote control can be used to control the VCR.

Annotation Tablet with Video Marker



The annotation tablets, provided at the presentation cart, enable the attorney to draw or mark on any video that is currently being viewed on the courtroom monitors. The attached video marker works like a pen: just press the tip of the marker on the pressure-sensitive tablet while watching the monitor. Different shapes and sizes of pointers as well as different colors and widths of lines can be used. There is a menu at the top of the tablet: use the marker pen to choose the option you want.

Some Guidelines:

- Select the color and line width you wish to use by pressing the tip of the pen on the appropriate menu item (located at the top of the tablet).
- To draw, simply draw as if you were using any type of drawing utensil.
- You can drop a pointer onto the video screen by placing the pen close to the pad and clicking the button located on the side of the pen. Select the pointer style on your menu (at the top of the tablet).
- Clear the screen by pressing the pen tip on "Clear," located at the top of the tablet.
- To draw on a blank screen, press "Chalkboard" on the menu.

Important Notes:

- If you press "Chalkboard" on the pad template, you will not be able to see any video images. Press "Video" to view the video source on all monitors.
- You can turn the pointer on and off at any time by pressing "Pointer On/Off" on the menu.

Video Printer



The color video printer allows printing of a picture of the currently selected video source, including any annotations made. Anything viewed on the courtroom monitors can be turned into hard copy for evidence purposes.

The printer is located at the presentation cart, usually on top of the VCR.

General instructions:

- Turn the power on. (The power switch is located on the lower left side of the front panel.)
- Make sure there is printer paper in the paper tray. (Load paper glossy side up.)
- Press the MEMORY IN button to capture the image you want.
- Press the PRINT button.
- Be patient: printing takes about 30 seconds.

Important Notes:

- To change the stored image, press the SOURCE/MEMORY button and then the MEMORY IN button.
- You will lose anything that you have “captured” if you turn off the power.
- You will get an audible and visual warning if there is an error.

Connecting a computer in the courtroom:



The court will provide the necessary computer cables to get you connected. Your laptop can be connected at counsel table, or at the podium. Please ask the courtroom deputy for assistance regarding your specific needs. It would be appreciated if you would contact the deputy at least a week prior to your trial or hearing.

Video Conferencing



The Western District of Oklahoma has one portable video conferencing system that can be used in several locations throughout the courthouse. Currently there are three conference rooms, two courtrooms, and a soon to be completed hearing room that can accommodate this equipment.

The court has used this technology for status conferences, hearings, trials, oral arguments, and other proceedings with sites throughout the U.S. The judicial system as a whole has found videoconferencing to be a cost-effective and productive technology for its needs.

Please notify the Clerk's office at least one week prior to your use of the video conferencing equipment. Sufficient time is needed to test the hookups and equipment at the other site.